SONG.

The song we never sung,
The pine-trees sigh in chorus;
The eyes our eyes must shun
Our hearts keep still before us

The rose we gathered not
Blooms in the soul forever,
And hands ne'er joined in life
Death has no power to sever.
—Lilla Cabot Perry, in the Century.

MONTANA BILL.

It was evident that something of uncommon interest had been arranged for the meeting that evening at the headquarters of the Salvation Army in San Francisco. Throughout the large attending crowd the spirit of expectancy moved uneasily, but with muffled wings; its energy stirred not only by divers vagrant rumors on the street, but also by many flowers and foliage plants which hampered the stage.

After some preliminary religious exercises conducted by the brigadier, a man with a clean face, a clear eye and a coaxing voice, that gentleman made the following speech:

"You doubtless all read at the time of its publication a telegram from Butte, Mont., announcing the distressing experience of our brave little sister, Cadet Annie Smith, who was so great a favorite with us here before she was assigned to duty at Butte."

There was an amused twinkle in the brigadier's eyes, but in the audience there was a spreading titter.

"Well," resumed the brigadier, "our noble little sister, with the help of God, passed safely through the ordeal, as most of you are aware, but as it is a part of our plan to confess publicly our errors and shortcomings I will ask Cadet Smith to give you the true and full account of what happened to her at Butte."

A faint clapping of hands, a vociferous "God bless Cadet Smith!" here and there and a removal of some of the restraints which muffled the wings of the spirit of expectancy greeted the ascent to the platform of a small, lithe young figure arrayed in the sombre blue and quaint poke bonnet of the army. Her face was a glowing crimson as she faced the audience, but her eyes were bright and her glance was firm, and the vigor of a strong and sturdy soul lent a certain grace of freedom to her pose.

"After I had served several months selling War Crys in San Francisco," she began with a steady voice which had acquired that plaintive quality so common the hard workers in the cause, "I was sent to Butte, where there was a small corps of workers. They had become discouraged, and it was thought that my experience would help them a little. I didn't know that Butte was so different from San Francisco, and the members of the corps there didn't know it either, because they had never worked anywhere else. That is why they didn't tell me some things that I wish I had known more about.

"I started out the first day with about 300 War Crys. They looked surprised at the corps headquarters when I asked for so many, but I thought I could sell them.

"Of course, I went into the hardest part of the town, and after I had visited one or two saloons and failed to sell a copy, I went into another one. A good many men were gambling. I had never seen anything but card playing in San Francisco, but they had wheels of fortune and a great many other things to gamble with. Several men were drinking at the bar. I went among them all and asked them to buy the paper, but they simply stared at me in wonder. The games began to stop, and then a big, fine looking man with a broad-brimmed hat came up to me and said—and he said—he said: 'Hello, little Parson Sally, what do you want?' He said it just like that. He was so big and his voice was so deep—and—and he was so——"

"Out with it, Cadet!" cried a half dozen voices in the audience as the girl broke down, stammering and blushing.

"Handsome!" she added desperately, as though the saying of the word was a cross between martyrdom and the confession of a mortal sin. Great applause and laughter followed this declaration with an occasional "God bless Cadet Annie!" This so overwhelmed the girl that her lips trembled and tears sprang to her eyes and she cast a despairing, appealing glance toward one peculiar spot before her in the audience where she had not had the courage to look before. That single look was sufficient to rivet the bonds of decorum which had held a giant in restraint, and the uprising of a towering frame sent the brigadier's programme and discipline tumbling into chaos. The tall man approached and mounted the platform with the stride of a grenadier, while Cadet Annie gazed at him with a dismay which was still inefficient to quench the light of the stars that shone all the brighter in her eyes now that her cheeks had paled. Simultaneously a startled hush fell upon the audience, for although the familiar uniform of the Salvation Army sat upon the man's splendid frame, he was a stranger to all, and there was a commanding air about him that stilled all sounds.

He stalked to the girl's side and stood there facing the big crowd like a lion at bay in defence of his lair. And an uncommonly handsome man he was, with swarthy face, jet black wavy hair worn long, and formidable black mustache and imperial. These two made a strange picture as they stood side by side, she so small and seemingly so frail, he so tall and muscular and competent; she looking up at him, he ignoring her and sweeping the hall with a glance half of defiance, half of benignancy, and wholly of strength and mastery. When the man spoke his voice rolled forth in those rounded billows that in a rich diapason sing the mysteries of the deep.

"My friends," he said, "with God's help and the brigadier's consent"—which he never took the trouble to secure—"it seems too hard for this poor child to tell what happened to her in the gambling house at Butte that day. I was there when it happened and saw it all, and I will tell you the story. I can't bear to see her tortured as she has been this night. Cadet Annie Smith, take your seat."

He said that still without looking at her. With a glance at the brigadier which meant, "How can I help it when this big thing shoulders me away?" she slipped behind the rose-embanked parlor organ and the embowering foliage plants on the stage and was lost to view.

The brigadier sat watching the man with a peculiar expression which no one could have understood had any one thought to observe it, but the stranger so completely filled all eyes and so impressed his masterly personality on the consciousness of all who could see and hear that nothing else could be observed. The stranger resumed:

"I knowed the gambler that played it low down on this brave little Salvation Army lassie that day—knowed him well. He was a big, hulking dog that had skinned tenderfeet all the way between Puget Sound and Lake Michigan. He didn't know what it was to make an honest living. He just sailed through life laughing at everything and skinning tenderfeet.

"He was running a faro game in a Montana joint when somebody left the door open and this little girl drifted in. The fellows wasn't used to the way she went after 'em. She just waded right in and tackled 'em, and them blue eyes she carried in her head looked straight at 'em and through 'em, as much as to say 'I think you'd be a real decent fellow if you'd read the War Cry, quit gam'bling, quit drinking gin an' have respect for good women.' That's what the fellows told me her eyes said to 'em.

"Then the big gambler she started to tell you about comes up and says to her: 'Hello, little Parson Sallie, what do you want?' 'I want to sell you a War Cry,' she says. 'A what?' says he. 'A War Cry," says she, and her calm blue eyes looked him through and through. 'A War Cry?' says he; 'What's that?' and he knowed as well as she did what it was.

"After badgering her that way and not making her lose an inch of ground, he told her he'd make a proposition by which she might sell him all the War Crys she had. The poor little thing listened to him, and her eyes got bright, and she asked him what the proposition was. He had her sit down at a card table, and he took three cards—a king and two spot cards—and shuffled 'em on the table so that she could see the king while he was shuffling 'em, and then asked her if she could pick out the king as the three cards lay face down, along side one another on the table. She said of course she could. He says to her, 'Try it.' She done so, and of course she picked out the king.

"He says: 'That's smart, and I didn't think you could do it. Now, I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll shuffle the cards, and every time you pick out the king I'll buy two War Crys. Every time you pick out a spot card you are to give me a War Cry for nothing.' She agreed to that.

"The poor child did'nt know that she was gambling—didn't know that she was tackling the notorious Montana Bill in his particular specialty—didn't know that she had run up against the slickest three-card monte thrower in the whole Northwest.

"Well, you know what happened. Bill cleaned the poor child out of every War Cry she had and then laughed at her. I saw her as she sat there, and I saw how she looked when she began to realize that she had lost all her papers and didn't have a cent to show for 'em. I saw how white she got, and how she stared at Bill like he'd run a knife through her body; I saw how she got up and looked around at the laughing men, like a lamb cornered by a pack of wolves; I saw her try hard to keep down the tears, and then she says: 'Men, I will pray to God to lead you all into better lives.' And her voice was so choked up she couldn't say any more. Then she walked out slowly and cried all the way up the street.

The big man paused, for his own voice had become unaccountably thick and had lost much of its rich, deep swing and resonance. But he soon regained his self-possession, and then proceeded:

"Montana Bill was a hard case for sure, but he had a small streak of manhood somewhere under his thick skin. The boys in the joint all thought it was a great joke on the little girl, and they laughed and shouted till they almost cracked the roof. But Bill didn't laugh. He stood silent and glum, with his hands in his pockets, looking out through the door. Then he went out, saying he had a game awaiting for him at Ike's saloon, and he went slouching up the street. The further he got away from the joint the faster he walked, and then he done a sneaking thing—he looked back to see if any of the boys was following him. They wasn't, though, and then he let out them long legs of his for the liveliest walk he ever took in his life.

"He soon caught sight of her, and then he slowed up and followed. She was still crying, and people would stop and wonder what was the matter, and some of 'em laughed. Bill got on to that, and it riled him through and through. He slapped one fellow clean into the middle of the street, and went right on without a word. I heard afterward that several people that he knowed spoke to him, but he didn't see none of 'em, and kept right on.

"The girl went straight to the headquarters of the Salvation Army, and Bill followed her in. She went into a little office, where there didn't happen to be any body else, and sat down and put her head on the table, and cried like her heart was broke. For the first time in his life Montana Bill's nerve broke down. She looked so small and forlorn and miserable that if he hadn't been the man that done her up he'd a gone out and whipped the fellow that did. And when he knowed that he was that identical scoundrel, and that there wasn't anybody big enough and man enough to whip him, he felt just like a thoroughbred dog that had been caught sucking eggs.

"I want to say this for Bill. Bad as he was, he never meant to rob the girl. He was only having fun with her in the saloon, and he meant to give her back the papers, but it was the way she acted in the saloon that made him forget. It was the pity that she showed for him and the little prayer she said that made him lose his head. And that was the first time in his life that Montana Bill ever lost his head.

"And so; when he saw her crying out her heart in the little office, she not knowing that anybody was about, he didn't have the nerve to own up like a man. He just snenked a $20 gold piece on to the table and tried to steal out like a thief. But she heard him, and saw the money and looked at him like he was a ghost, and sprung ahead of him and stopped him and stood there looking at him with a look he'd never seen in no mortal face in his life.

"'It was God who put it into your heart to follow me and bring that money,' she said to him, 'and as He has done that much, He has done more, and will keep on doing more, until that big manly heart in your body beats altogether for mankind and its Redeemer.'"

The giant paused. His narrative had been so simple and earnest that there were tears in many eyes. Perhaps it was these that sent his self-mastery astray, for when he essayed speech again he failed. Then he looked so foolish and helpless that a suppressed titter ran through the audience, and this made it all the worse for him.

At this juncture the brigadier stepped forth. A half merry, half whimsical expression lighted up his face as he gently pushed the giant into a platform seat facing the audience, and then said:

"And so it was too hard for the poor little girl to be made to tell before all these people what happened to her in the Butte saloon that day, and so a great, strong man, seeing how small and cruelly tortured she was, would come forward as her knight and protector. He would show the strength that lies in the heart of a giant. He——"

But the audience, having already caught the point, and seeing how foolish and childish the giant looked as he sat facing them with tears streaming down his cheeks, burst into great laughter and applause, with a "Hallelujah!" and a "God bless the big man!" now and then.

"This being the case," resumed the brigadier, "we may now proceed to the more interesting business of the evening. Cadet Annie Smith!" he called.

Two sparkling blue eyes, shining like stars under the canopy of a quaint blue poke bonnet, emerged from behind the foliage. Two fresh young cheeks as deeply banked with pink and red roses as the organ itself accompanied the eyes, and a trim little girlish figure, which owned the stars and the roses, advanced timidly to the front. A smile and a nod from the brigadier evoked activity in the collapsed muscles of the giant, who sat on the platform like an awkward schoolboy, and he came and stood clumsily beside the girl, and neither looked at the other.

"My friends," said the brigadier, in a very gentle and reverential voice, "it has pleased God to place it in my power to unite in the holy bands of matrimony this night two of the noblest hearts that ever beat in the service of the Saviour. One of these is Cadet Annie Smith, whom many of you know and love. The other is William Chatsworth Harvey, formerly known as Montana Bill, the sleekest three-card monte sharp in the whole Northwest."

FOE TO RATTLESNAKES.

The Little Kingsnake Always Tackles the Venomous Serpent.

No matter what the size of the Arizona rattlesnake, a little, harmless two and a half or three foot kingsnake will tackle these monsters and vanquish them sooner or later. He not only seeks the king of venomous serpents, but also destroys all other poisonous kinds whenever he has an opportunity. For this reason people of that region, black or white, who have lived in the territory for any length of time, will never kill a kingsnake knowingly or willfully. Soldiers in camp always welcome his presence, for as they never do any harm themselves it is a sure thing that no poisonous snakes will ever venture in camp while kingsnakes are around. The extreme length of this serpent is seldom more than four and a half or five feet. His body is slender and lithe, evidently built especially for constricting; in color he is a bright pea green, mottled with white and black spots, and quicker even than the coachwhip.

A citizen of Tucson, of undoubted veracity, a year ago described to the writer a fight that he and his wife had witnessed between a kingsnake and a black water moccasin while camping on a stream of water over the line in Chihuahua, Mexico.

"I was sitting," said he, "on a fallen cypress which extended some distance into the water, catching perch for supper. I noticed a large water-moccasin sunning himself on a level bench of dry mud that formed a part of the bank near me. I watched him for half an hour, when suddenly I heard a slight rustling on shore and saw the moccasin start for the water at double quick, but he was too late. Like a green flash, a beautiful kingsnake about four feet long came darting through the grass and placed himself between the moccasin and the water. Then began one of the most singular and interesting contests I ever witnessed. The moccasin, finding his retreat cut off, instantly threw himself into a coil, and, with his head raised about a foot above his body and swaying to and fro, his eyes glittering with an angry fire and his forked tongue flashing back and forth, gathered all his energies for defence in the deadly conflict which he knew was bound to follow.

"His smaller and more active adversary eyed him for a moment and then began to run with great rapidity around him in a gradually narrowing circle, keeping his own head raised a few inches above the earth and apparently watching for an opening. The moccasin always turned slowly in his coil, so as to always face his assailant. Once or twice he led viciously at the latter's head, but recovered in time to prevent a 'counter.' This went on for perhaps ten or fifteen minutes, when suddenly—and far too quickly to be followed by the eye—there was a flash of green and white in the air, and then a confused mass of writhing, twisting serpents rolling over and over on the ground, resembling the magic-lantern display of colored wheels.

"Presently the mass began to take definite shape, and then it was seen that the kingsnake had caught its big adversary by the left lower jaw and was holding on with bulldog grip, while he wrapped his own body around that of the moccasin like a cord around a pole. Then the squeezing process began, and soon the huge moccasin began to straighten out, while the folds of the kingsnake were drawn so closely as to almost bury themselves in his body. Finally the moccasin grew quiet except for a slight wriggling of the tail, and after lying still for some ten minutes or more the kingsnake, still holding his grip by the jaw, gradually unwound himself from the body of the other until they lay side by side on the ground.

"He waited in this position some minutes longer, apparently to assure himself that his opponent was really dead, and then let go his jaw hold, took one or two farewell trips around the body, and disappeared in the brush."

This experience is somewhat similar to one I had near Benson Springs two years ago. I was climbing a hill hunting for millipedes when suddenly I came upon a very big rattlesnake and a very small kingsnake engaged in a deadly combat. The fight had no doubt been in progress for some time, as both combatants were nearly used up, so to speak. I watched them with interest, saw the little green fellow had his favorite jaw grip, and that he was also slowly but surely squeezing the life out of the big Crotalus horridus. The latter's eyes were bulging from the terrific pressure, while his adversary seemed pretty well worn out in drawing his coils tighter and tighter. They were sunk into the rattler's body in great ridges, and were so reduced from the awful tension as to resemble a small coil of whipcord around a piece of large rope. When the rattler was dead the poor little kingsnake was so far gone as to be unable to uncoil himself. I performed this kind office for him, and after cutting nine rattles from the big one's tail I placed the conqueror in a small jar, and now have preserved him in alcohol for all time to come, in honor of his great and glorious victory.

Counting the Stars.

The numbering of the heavenly bodies, whether planet, satellite or star of the smallest size, has been commenced at the Paris Observatory by Miss Klumpke, Director of Sciences and Assistant Astronomer, in view of the publication of an international catalogue of the stars. The idea was formed at the Astronomical Congress in 1887, and already 189 photographs have been taken. Some only contain a dozen stars, this being a celestial desert; but others are crowded, even to the number of 1,500. The average number is 335 stars per photograph. Altogether the catalogue is expected to contain about 3,000,000 stars. A census of the heavenly bodies has long been needed. Now a woman comes forward and will count all the stars. She will be some time at it; but when the work is done it will be finished.

MRS. PEARY.

Wife of the Famous Arctic Explorer Talks of Their Polar Voyage.

Mrs. Peary, wife of the famous Arctic explorer, declares herself as having had more than enough of the polar regions, and is determined that her husband shall never repeat his travels in those frigid lands. When asked what experience stands out most prominently in connection with the unusual life while exploring, Mrs. Peary, without a moment's hesitation, said: "Our hunting the walrus. It is the only occasion in my life when I was so frightened that I would have welcomed death as a relief. We were out in a boat with Dr. Cook, 'Mat' and some natives. Mr. Peary had broken his leg, but was steering the boat, his legs in splints, stretched out before him. We saw the walrus coming toward us, and when the natives said 'Shoot at them,' we took our rifles and did so.

"Then followed a scene too terrible for words. The bullets had only entered the hides of these animals, enough to infuriate them, and they came forward enraged and with but one determination—to turn over the boat. They placed their long tusks on the gunwale and attempted to tip us out. I crouched at the bottom of the skiff, loading the rifles, so that the men would not have to wait a second. The sea was crimson with their blood, and for a few moments I did not know whether I should be shot by the excited men or drowned by the walrus. We killed about seventeen, and have some of the tusks. But don't let me talk about it any more."

Plucking the Ostrich.

The ostrich is first picked when about seven months old, and every seven months after that. The valuable feathers are found on the wings and tail. The third plucking is usually very good, and one hundred dollars is usually realized from each bird at a plucking. If the feather is not "ripe" when plucking time comes it is cut off with shears. A ripe quill stem drops out of its own accord. When the proper time has come to pluck an ostrich, he is cajoled by means of an orange or other tidbit until he is headed for a small, box-like inclosure, just large enough to hold him; a man slips in behind him, and, with a sudden rush, shoves him into the pen and clasps the door shut. Here the bird has no room to kick, and is at the mercy of the shearers. Ostriches cannot get over or under a railing four feet high. This is, therefore, all the fence necessary to keep them confined.

Women Make Poor Spies.

Women are not good detectives, said an experienced secret service man, on being asked his opinion by a New York Herald man. To begin with, there are many places to which a woman cannot go without exciting suspicion and this defeats her object at the outset, but beyond this a woman is unfitted by nature for detective work.

In the first place, she jumps at a conclusion and acts on it in opposition to all human probabilities, possibilities and reason. As a rule, a woman does not reason. She looks on a thing as she wants it to be or thinks it ought to be and will follow that theory. She is led by prejudices, favors or sympathies, regardless of facts. As a detective she is sometimes a success in entrapping a man, but her work generally ends in a blunder which betrays her. She is persevering only when moved by passion. She does not look at a case dispassionately. She at once decides that he or she is guilty or innocent and works on that theory.

A woman enjoys the mysterious, and she is so elated at her position as detective that she is unable to conceal her identity, or the secret investigation of a case.

Women are even failures in running down criminals of their own sex. A woman criminal will mislead a woman detective by working on her vanity, credulity or sympathy, and worst of all, if the detective be attractive and the man criminal handsome—well, a man is better for detective work.

His Political Record.

In every county of Kentucky you will find a lot of old men who take great pride in telling you that, for 40, or may be 50, years they have never voted anything but the Democratic ticket. They began, perhaps, with Jackson, and have come on down the line.

An old man of this sort, who was called "Uncle Billy," and who was very close fisted, one day saw a group of voters about Gov. Proctor Knott. Uncle Billy, leaning on his tall staff, edged his way in and asked to be introduced. He was formally presented "as the oldest voter in the county."

"Yes, gov'nor," said Uncle Billy, with evident pride, "I certainly am the oldest voter in the county. If airy man will fetch a man as has throwed more Democratic votes than I hev, I'll furnish the liquor——"

Hereupon several of the crowd, knowing Uncle Billy's stinginess, but eager for any chance to come into a treat, pricked up their ears, and Uncle Billy, noticing this, and becoming alarmed at the probable outlay if he should be proved wring, hemmed and hawed and added—that is, I'll furnish the liquor to airy man as fetches the man."—Century.

The London Dog Cemetery Full.

In Hyde Park, London, the dogs' burial ground at the north end of the park has been closed by the Duke of Cambridge in his capacity as ranger of Hyde Park. For nearly forty years certain persons have been allowed to bury their pet dogs there and to put up little tombstones over them. Now the cemetery is full.

How tender and devoted a young man is to an old lady when a pretty girl is looking at him!